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### **Plans to Bring Green Building Initiatives To a Wider Audience Announced During Statewide Summit at the NJMC**

LYNDHURST, N.J. – Celebrating the popularity of green building triumphs across the state of New Jersey while outlining new efforts to bring the concept to an even wider public were the highlights of today's Green Building Summit, sponsored by the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission and the Bergen County Utilities Authority.

State leaders and experts on the subject of green building laid out an agenda for energy efficiency, high performance and sustainable development during the summit, which was attended by developers, state representatives, local officials and Meadowlands stakeholders.

"What better place to discuss green building and sustainability and to pursue these initiatives than here in the Meadowlands, where we have both a dynamic engine for economic growth and a vital wetlands landscape in need of careful management and protection," said New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Acting Commissioner Charles Richman, also the Chairman of the NJMC. "Homeowners, employees, and companies looking to expand their facilities owe it to themselves to request green building. They're cleaner, healthier, brighter, and have been proven to be more productive workplaces and livable homes.

Richman announced several initiatives both for the Meadowlands District and throughout the entire state. In the Meadowlands, Richman directed the NJMC to host a technical workshop on green building, to be lead by the U.S. Green Building Council. Geared towards developers, the workshop will discuss the best ways to implement green building in existing and future development in the Meadowlands. The second effort calls for design guidelines in the NJMC's Master Plan and regulations that encourage sustainable construction and development.

Finally, Richman called for the creation of the Sustainable Meadowlands Institute, based at the NJMC's Meadowlands Environment Center and operated by Ramapo College of New Jersey. The institute will serve as a resource for developers and provide help in implementing green building standards, what incentives are available and how these efforts will become an economic asset.

In addition to Meadowlands District initiatives, Richman announced achievements and upcoming initiatives by the New Jersey Green Homes Office, recognized as a leader in this subject throughout the country.

The New Jersey Affordable Green Program, administered by the Green Homes Office, has exceeded 2,000 green units. This is the only state program in the country for affordable green housing. In addition, through this program, New Jersey will now require all state funded affordable housing to meet minimum green requirements.

Going beyond the minimum standards, this office also announced the beginning of the New Jersey High Performance Homes Plus program. This voluntary construction rating program will establish a state green building standard for residences. It will promote energy efficient building practices among builders and educate consumers about the advantages of green homes.

“New Jersey is a recognized as a national leader for the states green and energy programs and policy initiatives, we’re positioning the State to meet the challenges ahead while providing healthy, environmentally advanced and economically sustainable homes today,” said Darren Port, Director of the New Jersey Green Homes Office.

The Green Homes Office also announced plans to organize a Green Policy Working Group to promote sustainable development throughout the state, and to host a national green affordable housing in the state.

The New Jersey Home and Mortgage Financing Company was among the other prominent agencies and organizations on hand during the Green Building Summit. The HMFA announced plans to offer an additional point for green building and/or solar technology on the 2006 Low Income Housing Tax Credit Qualifying Allocation Plan.

“The Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency is dedicated to implementing policies and practices to help transform the market and aid the development of more sustainable and energy efficient affordable housing,” said Marge Della Vecchia, Executive Director of the HMFA. “We are working to increase the affordability and productivity of housing while minimizing the use of non-renewable resources and reducing the effects of development on our environment.”

Other speakers during the summit included Gregory Kats, the Energy and Atmosphere Committee Chair for the U.S. Green Building Council; Michael Winka, the Director of the New Jersey Office of Clean Energy; and Anthony Sblendorio with the Back to Nature Landscape Associates.

“Today, we’ve shown the efforts by these agencies for green building and sustainable energy is an model for the entire nation,” said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. “Green building initiatives start close to home. At the NJMC, we’ve committed to have our existing building comply with USGBC standards, and our new observatory and science center will be built to green building standards. We also are replacing older vehicles in our fleet with new, fuel-efficient hybrids. We hope others have been inspired today to consider green building materials and energy conservation.”

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